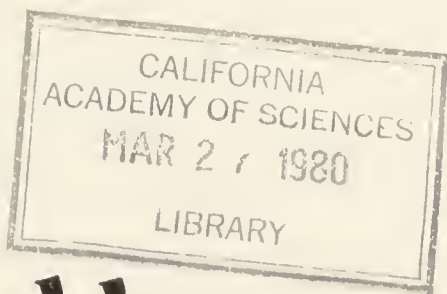


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0164-971X



# the gull

Volume 62

Berkeley, Calif.

April 1980

Number 4

## Land of the Quetzal and Fer de Lance

In recent years Costa Rica has become a popular destination for birders due to the wide variety of habitats and the large number of species concentrated in a very small area. From one of the most beautiful birds in our hemisphere, the Resplendent Quetzal, to one of the most famous reptiles, the fer de lance, Costa Rica is a paradise for the naturalist.

Last August, George Peyton visited Costa Rica for the second time after an absence of more than 20 years. At the April general membership meeting he will guide us on a slide tour through jungles and mountain cloud forests to some of its best birding spots, such as Monteverde, La Selva and the Osa Peninsula. As the most conservation-minded Latin America country Costa Rica has set aside substantial areas in national parks and reserves and has established a number of biological research stations, some of which will be featured in this program.

As an added attraction to those interested in the tropics, Chris Carpenter, co-leader of the GGAS tour to Panama next January, will be on hand to provide information about his trip. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 10, at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley.

—PROGRAM COMMITTEE

## Field Trips Calendar

**FIELD TRIPS, FEES AND RESERVATIONS.** We have received a number of calls recently regarding information about fees for field trips. GGAS does not charge for field trips and reservations are not

required unless stated in *The Gull*. Fees for pelagic and bus trips cover only the expense of chartering boats and buses. Fees may be required at some parks; these are the responsibility of individual birders. Car pooling is encouraged and gas expenses should be shared. All field trip leaders volunteer their services and it is the policy of GGAS not to pay fees or honorariums to field trip leaders.

See the March *Gull* for details of the following trips:

**April 6—Golden Gate Park, Easter walk.**

**May 4 and 11—Pelagic trips to the Farallones.**

**Saturday, April 12—Lake Merced, San Francisco.** Meet at 8 a.m. at the south end of Sunset Blvd. in the Lake Merced Circle. (The lake is located in the southwest corner of the city.) This is a fine time to see spring migrants as well as many of the birds which winter in the area. We will caravan to Fort Funston to see Black Scoters and the Bank Swallow colony. Bring your lunch. We should bird into the early afternoon. Leader: Dan Murphy (564-0074).

**Sunday, April 12—Bothe-Napa State Park.** This is a particularly beautiful park in the spring, with migrating warblers and vireos, Winter Wrens, wildflowers and, if we are lucky, Pileated Woodpeckers. We will walk about 4-5 miles and will mostly bird by ear. From the East Bay take I-80 north, turn off to Napa, follow Hwy. 29 to St. Helena. Just past the Old Bale Mill north of St. Helena is the entrance to the park, on your left. From the West Bay, take Hwy. 101 north to Hwy. 37 near Novato, go east to the junction with Hwy. 121 (turn left at the junction) and follow 121 north and east to Napa where it joins Hwy. 29. Continue northwest to the park. Meet in the parking lot at 9 a.m. Bring lunch. There is a day use fee. Carpool if possible. Leader: Gene Hull (525-6892). (✓) \$

**Tuesday, April 15—Tennessee Valley to Tennessee Cove.** Meet at 9 a.m. at the Tennessee Valley trailhead. From Hwy. 101 take the Mill Valley/Stinson Beach exit and go west for about ½ mile. Turn left at the Tennessee Valley sign and drive about one mile to the end of the road. We will walk on a level trail to see land and sea birds as well as spring wildflowers. In the past we have seen Northern Orioles and Lark Sparrows among others. Leader: Pat Triggs (664-8502).

**Wednesday, April 16—Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley.** From north Berkeley, drive up Spruce St. Where Spruce intersects Grizzly Peak Blvd., cross Grizzly and immediately turn left down Cañon Drive

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*Published each month except August by the Golden Gate Audubon Society, office address 2718 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94705. Second class postage paid in Berkeley, CA. (THE GULL - USPS 417-705)*

and follow the signs directing you to the Tilden Nature Area. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the Nature Center. The air should be filled with the songs of the Black-headed Grosbeaks, Northern Orioles and Warbling Vireos. Bring lunch. Trip is canceled if rain. Leaders: Delpha de Timofeev and Ruth Voss (525-8032).

**Saturday, April 19—Mines Road, Livermore.** Meet at **8 a.m.** in the parking lot of the Lucky Store at S. Livermore and Pacific in Livermore. From there we drive on mountain roads to Patterson. Bring food and liquids or buy lunch at the Branding Iron around noon. The habitat is such that we can expect to see Northern Oriole, Lewis' Woodpecker and Phainopepla. Roadrunners and wild turkeys have also been seen on this trip. Leader: Art Edwards (447-3720). (✓)

**Sunday, April 20—Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Station.** Fifteen fortunate persons will be able to visit this unique facility to observe firsthand the captive breeding program at its peak activity, raising Prairie Falcons, Harris Hawks and Peregrine Falcons for reintroduction into the wild, with George Peyton as our guide. Anyone interested should call the GGAS office, 843-2222, for reservations.

**Saturday, April 26—Five Brooks Trailhead and Inverness Ridge.** Meet at **8 a.m.** at the Larkspur Ferry Terminal, section H. From Hwy. 101 exit at Sir Francis Drake Blvd. and go east to the terminal. From the Richmond-San Rafael bridge go south toward San Anselmo to terminal. We will carpool from here to Five Brooks (about 5 miles south of Olema on Hwy. 1). We should arrive by 9 a.m. Pack a lunch and wear hiking boots for a 5-mile walk up Inverness Ridge. We should see a fine variety of spring migrants. Leader: George Hugenberg (526-5289). (✓)

**Sunday, April 27—Bollinas Lagoon, Marin County.** This trip will be designed especially for beginners. Meet at **8 a.m.** at the Over the Hill Bar, about ½ mile north of the stop sign in "downtown" Stinson Beach on Hwy. 1. During the morning we will bird the Bollinas lagoon shoreline. It should be especially good for shorebirds and migrating ducks. The trip will end after lunch, but there will be plenty of time to visit Audubon Canyon Ranch before returning home. Bring lunch and a scope. Leader: Lyn Stenzl (868-1073). (✓)

**Sunday, May 4—Putah Creek.** Meet at **9 a.m.** at the top of Monticello Dam at the east end of Lake Berryessa. From Napa, go north on Hwy. 121 to Hwy. 128 and east to the dam or take the Pleasant Valley Road from I-80 (about 4 miles east of Fairfield) north to Hwy. 128 and west to the dam. Bring lunch. We will bird the dam and along Putah Creek. Canyon and Rock Wrens, Phainopeplas, Northern Orioles and a wide variety of other resident species may be expected. Leader: Bob O'Brien (526-8241). (✓) \$



**Saturday-Sunday, May 17-18—Audubon Canyon Ranch.** In order to show us their new facilities at Volunteer Canyon and to thank GGAS for its continued support, ACR is offering 30 of our members a splendid weekend at the Ranch. On **Saturday**, arrive at Volunteer Canyon between **11 a.m. and 12 noon**. Bring lunch. In the afternoon, John Kipping, Ranch biologist/naturalist, and his assistant, Ane Rovetta, will show members through the facilities at Volunteer Canyon and then lead small groups to explore the nearby forests, creeks and salt marsh. A pot luck dinner will close the day.

On **Sunday**, the group will hike over to Audubon Canyon before the general public is admitted and spend an hour at the heronry. The rest of the day will be spent slowly exploring the 4-mile loop trail with a picnic lunch (supply your own) en route.

For those with the inclination, ACR personnel invite members to become involved in learning and working in the vegetable and native plant garden.

To sign up for this exceptional trip, call the GGAS office (843-2222). At that time you will be told what to bring for the overnight stay and you will be assigned your contribution for the pot luck dinner. Directions to Volunteer Canyon will also be given at this time. Remember, the trip is limited to 30 members, so call early.

**Future Yosemite Trip Accommodations:** On the weekend of May 30-June 1, Marie Mans will lead a trip to Yosemite featuring bird songs. Noncampers may wish to reserve cabins at the Sugar Pine Ranch in Groveland (209) 962-7823. Camping information will be in the *May Gull*. On the weekend of August 8-10, George Peyton will lead an alpine ecology trip to the Yosemite high country, including a climb of Mt. Hoffman next to May Lake. Those interested in reserving accommodations should call Yosemite Park & Curry Co. immediately at (209) 373-4171. Wouldbe campers may contact the National Park Service to see if campsites may be reserved. May Lake High Sierra Camp, Tuolumne Meadows High Sierra Camp and White Wolf Lodge are the closest noncamping facilities for the August trip.

**Carpooling:** Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). If you need a ride or are offering one, call Kate Partridge at work (642-6881, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.) or at home before 9 p.m. (548-0779). All expenses, including gas and incidental fees, are shared by riders. It is best for all involved to plan these arrangements with the driver at the outset of the trip.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

## February Observations – Through February 26

### FARALLONES, December 21 to January 20

A gadfly petrel was reported Jan. 13 (BB, PRBO) but I have seen no details. Up to two Cattle Egrets remained to Dec. 31. The two Rock Sandpipers, the first seen on the Island since 1973, and the Loggerhead Shrike are still wintering. A Glaucous Gull was seen Jan. 6, 9 and 16, on which day another was also present. An unprecedented 12+ Heermann's Gulls are wintering, mostly around the Elephant Seals. All reports are courtesy of Point Reyes Bird Observatory.

### BIRDS CONTINUING INTO FEBRUARY

Cattle Egret: six near Half Moon Bay Feb. 2 (LH, SW), 20+ in Merced County Feb. 3 (PW, mob). Eurasian Wigeon: Fleishhacker Zoo to Feb. 23 (BBa, JL). Tufted Duck: male at Coyote Hills Feb. 3 (WG, AG). Harlequin Duck: male at Moss Landing Feb. 9, female at Land's End through early February (AH). Oldsquaw: Monterey Harbor through Feb. 23 (DR, JML, *et al.*). Bald Eagle: adult at Paicines Reservoir Feb. 2 (PW, mob). Rock Sandpiper: Bodega Head Feb. 23 (JM, *et al.*), Princeton Harbor Feb. 12 (PM, DM, MK, SK), Pebble Beach Feb. 2 (LH, SW). Yellow Warbler: Walton Square, San Francisco, through Feb. 22 (DE). Palm Warbler: Limantour (out on the spit) Feb. 9 (MG, HG). **Great-tailed Grackle**: female roosting in Walton Square at least through Feb. 15 (DE). Evening Grosbeak: flock at College of Marin Feb. 3 (JL). Harris' Sparrow: Lafayette through late Feb. (MO, BR, DE).

### LOONS THROUGH RAPTORS

A Yellow-billed Loon discovered at Point Richmond Feb. 17 (HJ) has stayed and excited many observers through this writing. More surprising was a single flock of loons (mostly Arctic and Red-throated) estimated at 6000 that flew like locusts about a mile off Muir Beach Feb. 3 (SFB)! A few Manx Shearwaters (and the usual Short-tailed Shearwaters) inhabited Monterey Bay (mob) and 30 Manx were recorded off Monterey Feb. 24 (SFB, DE, SAS). After this boat trip a flock of 23 Cattle Egrets was found near Castroville (EH).

Three "Blue" Geese highlighted the Merced National Wildlife Refuge Feb. 3 (DG, PW, mob). A Eurasian Wigeon visited Alameda South Shore Feb. 3 (PMa). Another Eurasian Wigeon and a hybrid Eurasian X American Wigeon spent the first week of February at Limantour (DMcC, HG, MG). Three more sites featured male Tufted Ducks: the upper extension of Abbott's Lagoon Feb. 5 (JE), Mill Valley Feb. 6-16 (JC, RS, JM, mob) and Berkeley Aquatic Park Feb. 17 (BJ, JM, JMu).

A male Harlequin Duck enlivened the Pacific Grove shore Feb. 16-23 (PWS, LAAS, JML, *et al.*) and a female was reported at Bodega Bay Feb. 16. Additional Oldsquaw sightings were: Moss Landing Feb. 2 (LH, SW), Berkeley Pier Feb. 2-3 (SA, BL), Abbott's Lagoon Feb. 5 (JE) and flying past Point Richmond Feb. 20 (BR).

Two "Harlan's" Hawks appeared on interior farmland, Panoche Valley, Feb. 2 (PW, mob) and Woodbridge Road, San Joaquin County, Feb. 24 (JM, *et al.*). Two Swainson's Hawks along Blossom Road, San Joaquin County, Feb. 24 (EA, JM, *et al.*) were very early but not unprecedented. An adult Bald Eagle stopped along Greenwood Road, Livermore, during late February (AE).

### CHARADRIIFORMS

A **Wilson's Phalarope** in winter plumage Feb. 20 near the KGO tower east of the Dumbarton Bridge (CS, SFB) constitutes the first winter record for Northern California. The date is almost two months in advance of normal spring arrival. Glaucous Gulls were reported from four locations: Davis Street Dump Feb. 2 (VD, SFB, *et al.* - different individual from the one on Jan. 25) and Feb. 10 (SW), Richmond Dump Feb. 10 (DE), Monterey Harbor Feb. 16 (BH, TB, LAAS) and north of Alcatraz Island Feb. 18 (DN). Both the **Black-headed Gull** and the **Little Gull** were found Feb. 4 (JML) wintering again at the Stockton Sewage Ponds; they were still there at this writing (mob, DJ). Both are now in adult winter plumage; last winter was the Little Gull's second, according to the plumage it wore. A pair of Marbled Murrelets repeated at the Berkeley Pier Feb. 10 (AG, WG) and another was spotted off Cypress Point, Richmond, Feb. 23 (BR). Ancient Murrelets seem to be returning to more normal winter status.

### PASSERINES

The earliest returning Cliff Swallow on record was noticed at Los Banos Feb. 3 (DG, PW, mob). An Eastern Phoebe and a perhaps rarer MacGillivray's Warbler were well described from Santa Cruz Feb. 24 (SG). Most of our reported passerine rarities are wintering in one mixed flock, the "Short Street Gang" at Short and Wood streets in Pacific Grove. The prize **Cape May Warbler** was seen here only Jan. 31 (DD), but the Solitary Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, two Nashville Warblers, two "Bullock's" Northern Orioles and a Hooded Oriole have been continuously present (DR, DD, *et al.*). Another Hooded Oriole was reported in San Leandro Feb. 24 (MA). A Western Tanager was seen in Walnut Creek Feb. 13 (WO). An immature male Rose-breasted Grosbeak has been visiting a feeder in Kensington since early December (SB). About 12 Evening Grosbeaks were near Platform Bridge Road,



Marin County, Feb. 7 (BP). Red Crossbills still inhabit Lincoln Park, San Francisco, and in early February one was observed carrying nesting material (AH, JM, *et al.*).

**Observers:** Steve Aanestad, Milton Abbott, Elmer Aldrich, Stephen F. Bailey, Bruce Barrett (BBa), Steve Beckendorf, Bob Boeckelheide (BB), Tony Briggs, Jean Canepa, Donna Dittmann, Vickie Dziadosz, Art Edwards, Dick Erickson, Jules Evens, Steve Getty, Al Ghiorso, Wilma Ghiorso, Doug Gomke, Helen Green, Michael Green, Leo Hallford, Ed Harper, Bob Hirt, Alan Hopkins, Hans Johanson, Dick Johnson, Bill Jones, Michael A. Kelly, Shirley J. Kelly, Jeri M. Langham, Bill Link, John Luther, Paul Matzner (PMa), Dianne McClung, Peter Metropulos (PM), many observers (mob), Joe Morlan (JM), Jolaine Munck (JMu), Dan Murphy, Dan Nelson, Rod Norden, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Winifred Orcutt, Merv Ortez, Bill Pursell, Bob Richmond, Don Roberson, P. William Smith, Los Angeles Audubon Society, Sacramento Audubon Society, Rich Stallcup, Chris Swarth, Peter White, Steve Wilson.

—STEPHEN F. BAILEY, *Observations Editor*

Museum of Vertebrate Zoology

University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720

(phone 548-9507; or Karen L. Bailey at 642-3327 8 a.m.-noon, 1-5 p.m.)

## Conservation Notes

**EARTH DAY TEN.** This month is the tenth anniversary of an event that was the turning point for environmental awareness in America — Earth Day 1970. April 22 will mark a decade of great progress toward the goal of environmental protection. New laws now mandate cleaner air and water and control of toxic substances and an ethic of land use and renewable resources is developing. Land preservation has become a popular cause and support for protecting wilderness areas is still expanding as more people discover the values of preservation in a crowded world. As for the economy, the environmental movement in the past decade, has produced *more* jobs and actually *stimulated* economic activity, contrary to many predictions.

But perhaps the greatest gain is the heightened awareness of the problems facing us all on the planet and a commitment to solving them. Even though the next decade will certainly bring greater and more complicated threats to the environment—toxic chemicals, acid rain, reckless energy-development-at-any-cost and the population bomb—the awareness and widespread commitment to a green future is a healthy and hopeful sign. Celebrate Earth Day, April 22, 1980.

**VOTE ENVIRONMENTAL.** A petition is now circulating to get an "Environmental Bill of Rights" initiative on the November ballot. The bill declares that "the people have a right to a healthful and productive environment" and then spells out the specifics, such as "clean air in urban centers; renewable, safe and non-wasteful energy systems; agricultural lands protected from urban or suburban sprawl," etc. The initiative defines a strong environmental ethic and expands the existing inalienable rights provisions in the state constitution. It requires 500,000 signatures by next month to qualify for the November ballot and may be signed at the GGAS office.

—CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

## The Fabric of Nature

Over the towering grove of conifers, a thin veil of fog hung lightly. The darkened dripping limbs stood softly silhouetted against the graying pre-dawn sky. From a thick tangle of gnarled fir boughs, a Spotted Owl barked four times, then flapped noiselessly off to its diurnal roost. Suddenly, the gray flamed to life as Apollo broke the eastern horizon and splashed the sky with salmon and gold. The black forest sparkled silver-green and greeted the infant day.

A few miles to the south and one thousand meters overhead, a gentle chorus of chirps and squeaks drifted earthward. A weary flock of nocturnal migrants was descending toward the forest, needing to rest and feed before continuing northward the next evening. The isolated canyon, with its dense cover of fir and oak, appeared like an island in a sea of gray chaparral. The migrants fluttered down into the trees.

Like flashing lights in a Christmas tree forest, the brilliantly colored songbirds flitted from branch to branch. Several male orioles chased each other through the damp foliage and a red-headed tanager burst into song. A handful of female tanagers ignored him, too hungry after the all-night flight to be interested in his premature courting. They foraged restlessly, fresh yellow plumage radiating in the low yellow light of the early morning sun.

A pair of Hermit Warblers intercepted a second flock while foraging in the fir crowns. A dozen Yellow-rumped Warblers, handsomely dressed in their nuptial gray and yellow, sallied among the upper branches, while titmice, kinglets and chickadees argued noisily in the lower canopy of oak. Three creepers surveyed a cluster of bay trunks, then flew on, alighting in separate trees near the male tanager. The chipping Yellow-rumped Warblers followed and soon the two flocks had merged, searching through the canyon together until mid-morning. . .



"Ecology . . . the interdependence of all living things . . . the web of life . . . break one strand and . . . ?" It has been a decade since the first Earth Day, nearly two decades since Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Now, most of us have at least a conversational knowledge of environmental concerns. We are aware that the destructive impact of man's activities can at times be world-wide in scope. As a result, it is essential that we as conservationists (or environmentalists, if you prefer) achieve a global perspective. Hopefully, a look at migration and different bird communities can focus our attention on this necessity.

A late April walk through a central California woodland reveals a host of international travelers. Many of our regular summer visitors—orioles, tanagers, grosbeaks, warblers—spend a good portion of the year in the neotropics of Mexico, Central and South America. Similarly, many of our winter visitors, such as Fox Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers, will migrate far north to mate and raise young in Alaska. Meanwhile, creepers, titmice and chickadees remain in the same forests all year long with relatively little dispersal. Thus, at one time in a single flock, we can see birds which span virtually the entire latitudinal range of the Americas in their wanderings.

Even more striking is the great aggregation of pelagic species off our coasts in the fall. Arctic-breeding jaegers may harass terns born in Mexico. Northern Fulmars mix with shearwaters from the South Pacific. South American petrels may dance above the same swells as Alaskan phalaropes. How all these species congregate at certain times of the year, how they avoid (or don't avoid) competitive interactions, how they find their ways back to their distant and far-flung breeding grounds are all unsolved mysteries. What we do realize, however, is that oil development in Alaska and introduced predators in New Zealand can both affect the size and composition of bird populations off the California coast. What we do realize is that our planet is disturbingly finite.

My favorite reminder of this fact is a small arctic thrush, the Wheat-ear. Each year, the populations in the Alaskan arctic abandon their alpine breeding grounds in the Brooks Range and migrate southwest, making an incredibly arduous journey across the Soviet Union, China, the Indian sub-continent and the Persian Gulf before arriving at their wintering grounds in Tanzania. If only we could cross those same international borders so easily!

Next time you see a mixed flock of birds, take the time to wonder where they are coming from and where they are going. Take the time to wonder of their past and of their future. For to wonder is to ask and to ask is to learn. Only in learning first ourselves can we ever fully accept our responsibility to show others respect for our planet. We must, lest the fabric of nature come undone.

... The fog lowered as dusky twilight gave way to darkness. For a moment, all was still except for the dripping of condensed water droplets on the moist forest litter. A light breeze swayed the fir limbs and then a low chattering began. Chirps, squeaks, chips—the migrant flock called restlessly, ready to be off again. A Townsend's Warbler chipped and took flight, climbing steeply above the grove. An oriole followed, then another, next a few tanagers and finally the entire flock sprung skyward, flying above the fog into the cool spring night sky. The stars shone brightly as the birds circled briefly and then veered north. Many miles would pass beneath them before dawn.

—BRIAN J. McCAFFERY

## Audubon Adventures for April

Three natural history seminars have been scheduled for April in GGAS' Audubon Adventure series. They are:

**A DAY WITH GORILLAS**, Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. John Alcaraz, an animal keeper at the San Francisco zoo since 1959, will give a lecture/slide presentation of the primates which inhabit the zoo. After a tour of the present and future gorilla facilities, we will visit and learn about other primates such as orangutans, chimpanzees and the brilliantly colored mandrills of Africa.

**FIRST DAY BIRDING** with Susanne Luther, Sunday, April 20, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. In this class we invite beginning birders to join us at Sunol Regional Park, one of the best birding areas in the East Bay. We will look for Golden Eagles, Virginia Rails and the many more common birds of the oak woodland and digger pine community. Our walk will be leisurely, encompassing some of the most productive areas of the park. Wear good walking or hiking shoes, appropriate clothes for warm or cool weather and bring a bag lunch.

**INTRODUCTION TO BAY AREA WILDFLOWERS**, Saturday, April 26, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. This course, given by John Couch and Denise Alexander, will be a beginner's guide to Bay area wildflowers. Included in the class will be a lecture/slide presentation followed by a walk emphasizing a first approach to knowledge of flower parts and the identification of native plants. The presentation will be given at the East Bay Regional Park's Botanical Garden's visitors' center in Tilden Park, Berkeley, followed by a walk in the nearby hills which will extend over the lunch hour so it is suggested that you pack a lunch.

(Continued on page 65)

# Will You Be One of the Lucky 17?

A pre-spring cleaning of the GGAS office revealed a treasure trove of 17 autographed Guy Coheleach prints of a Red-shafted Flicker which the GGAS Board of Directors has decided to use in our 1980 membership drive.

These prints will be awarded—one each, of course—to the first 17 members who deliver to the GGAS office by mail or in person four or more new paid members!

Another inducement being offered to members who nominate one or more prospects is the new map of “Audubon’s America,” published by the National Audubon Society, which will be sent both to the nominator and the new member.

We hope these fringe benefits of your own GGAS membership will inspire you to deluge the office with scores of new paid members and hundreds of prospects. Every addition to our roster strengthens our conservation efforts in the Bay Area and throughout California.

—GGAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Please enroll for GGAS and National Audubon membership

Name.....

Address.....

..... Zip.....

Please enroll for GGAS and National Audubon membership

Name.....

Address.....

..... Zip.....

Please enroll for GGAS and National Audubon membership

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\*See back of *Gull* for membership rates



Please enroll for GGAS and National Audubon membership

Name.....

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I nominate for GGAS and National Audubon membership

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(Continued from page 62)

Cost of each of these courses will be \$9 per person for GGAS members plus any additional fees such as facility costs or extra instructor time. If you are not a member of GGAS the cost will be an additional **one-time** fee of \$20 per person or \$25 per family. This additional fee provides a year's membership in GGAS and National Audubon Society which includes subscriptions to *The Gull* and NAS's *Audubon* magazine.

To enroll in any of these courses, please send your check and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 2718 Telegraph Ave., #206, Berkeley, CA 94705. Include course title, its date and the number of people planning to attend.

You will be sent complete information on the course with a confirmation of your enrollment. For any further information call the GGAS office at 843-2222.

## Birding Classes

**ALBANY:** Following the GGAS Costa Rica trip, **Dr. Stephen F. Bailey**, *Gull* Observations Editor, will teach two classes at Albany Adult School. The third of his **Avian Biology** series (no prerequisite) will cover breeding biology, especially territorial, nesting and parental behavior. Class discussions will be supplemented by slides. Reading the appropriate chapters in an ornithology text should allow anyone to participate fully. Steve recommends chapters 12-17 in Welty's *The Life of Birds*. Three local Saturday morning field trips on May 17 and 31 and June 7 will provide first-hand experience in observing breeding biology. Evening classes will meet 7-9 p.m. on four consecutive Thursdays from May 15 through June 5.

Steve's other class, **Spring Vagrant Landbirds**, specializes on this phenomenon whose popularity has recently exploded on the Bay Area bird scene. Eastern passerines, mostly warblers, straying to California arrive mostly from late May through June and concentrate on Point Reyes and similar "vagrant traps." We will scour Point Reyes for vagrants on two one-day trips (by arrangement). Four Tuesday evening slide lectures will discuss the occurrence, finding and identification of vagrants. Slides will illustrate virtually every spring vagrant of Northern California. As many of these individuals are singing while here, tapes of their songs will be played and discussed. Tuesday meetings are 7-9 p.m. May 20 through June 10. This class will be a good start toward learning the more numerous and more difficult fall vagrants.

For more information call the school at 526-6811.

**PIEDMONT and ORINDA:** Susanne Luther is offering four field ornithology classes through Piedmont Adult School and the Orinda Community Center this spring. Her popular midweek field classes through Piedmont Adult School will be offered on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, 9 a.m.-12 noon. In a ten-week course birders will be introduced to some of the best birding spots in the Bay Area and observe the parade of spring migrants, as well as become familiar with our own breeding birds.

On Monday mornings, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Susanne will teach a class at the Orinda Community Center with lectures and slides on bird behavior and identification of the birds of California. This class is an excellent accompaniment to one of the midweek field classes.

On Tuesday evenings Susanne will offer a class at Piedmont Adult School on bird behavior and field identification with field trips arranged on weekends. The field trips will include a three-day trip in May to Death Valley and a weekend trip to the Sierra in June.

All classes begin the week of April 7. For more information call Piedmont Adult School at 653-9454 or the Orinda Community Center at 254-2445.

## GGAS-Sponsored Tours

### ECUADOR and the GALAPAGOS ISLANDS, July 5-26, 1980

This tour includes some of the best tropical birding in the world with over 1400 species. Ecuador is a very beautiful and diverse Andean country straddling the equator. We will visit the Andean highlands, the Amazon basin, tundra-like grasslands, the west coast cloud and subtropical forests and also spend a week cruising through the extraordinary Galapagos archipelago.

The tour is co-sponsored by the San Francisco Zoological Society and will be led by Paul Greenfield and Mike Wihler. Paul is a leading expert on Ecuadorian birds and is currently writing a *Field Guide to the Birds of Ecuador* to be published by Princeton University Press. Mike has led numerous GGAS tours.

The trip will be limited to 10 or 15 people and the cost will be \$1690 plus air fare. For more information contact South American Wilderness Adventures, Inc., 1760 Solano Ave., #203, Berkeley, CA 94707, (415) 524-5111.



**PANAMA—January 10-26, 1981**

The birder who looks to the future should visit Panama now, where the faunas of North and South America intermingle, while the beautiful Canal Zone tropical forests remain. There is no better area in Latin America where such a variety of abundant bird, plant and mammal life can be so easily and comfortably seen. Hotels are airconditioned, food is good and health standards are high. We will visit both Pacific and Atlantic rain forests, savannahs, foothills and the Chiriqui highlands to see the Resplendent Quetzal. Over 880 species of birds have been recorded in Panama—the 1978 Atlantic area Canal Zone Christmas Count had 354 species in a single day!

Tour leaders are Joe Morlan and Chris Carpenter. Joe is co-author of *Birds of Northern California*, compiler of the rare bird alert and has birded in Mexico and Venezuela. Chris has been leader of several GGAS field trips and has birded in Mexico and Costa Rica.

Price of the tour will be approximately \$1900 (subject to air fare increases) and will include *all* food, lodging and transportation. For information contact Joe at 654-1358 or Chris at 376-6802.

## Birding Fort Funston, San Francisco

Fort Funston is the southern extremity of the Golden Gate National Reereation Area (GGNRA) in San Francisco. Named in honor of Major General Frederiek Funston on June 26, 1917, it was the site of a 16-inch coastal gun battery during World War II and served as a military base until it was turned over to the GGNRA in 1972. Today, hang gliders fly past empty gun emplacements, people walk their dogs through the dunes, sun bathe on the beach and fish in the surf. Habitat is preserved for a few of San Francisco's native dune plants and a number of introduced species including the massive planting of ice plant and the isolated groves of eucalyptus, Monterey Cypress and Monterey Pine. The sand dunes and cliffs along the beach are relatively recent geologic formations.

Features of major interest to birders are the flocks of Black Seoters in the surf all year and the Bay Area's only known Bank Swallow colony. Migrants can be seen here during both spring and fall and there are a number of records for fall vagrants.

To reach the beach area of Fort Funston from the intersection of Sloat Boulevard and Great Highway (by the Zoo), go south on the



Great Highway to the second parking lot on the right (1); park as close to the south end of the lot as possible.

Black Scoters may be seen just beyond the second row of breakers at any season of the year. As many as ten may be here during the summer and 30 to 80 are not uncommon during other seasons. Surf Scoters can generally be seen near shore, but White-winged Scoters seem to prefer to stay well beyond the surf and generally can only be seen in flight. Watch for Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Brown Pelican, Heermann's Gull and Caspian Tern from mid-spring through mid-fall. All three species of loons, Western Grebe, Brandt's and Double-crested Cormorant, Red-breasted Merganser, Glaucous-winged, Western, California, Mew and Bonaparte's Gull and Forster's Tern may be seen here from late summer through spring. The only shorebirds to be expected are Marbled Godwit, Willet and Sanderling. Long-billed Curlew, Whimbrel and Black-bellied Plover may be seen during spring and fall migrations. From early April through June the Bank Swallow colony is active. Walk south along the beach for about one-quarter mile. The bluffs to the left are quite steep and it is here the Bank Swallows dig their burrows (2). In 1979 at least one pair of Rough-winged Swallows was seen entering a burrow in the colony and a Belted Kingfisher was active in the area. The deep gully which divides the cliffs marks the end of the area where recent colonies have been located. It also provides access to the dunes and groves of trees above, but it may be better to return to the parking lot and drive to the south end of Fort Funston.

To reach the south entrance to Fort Funston, drive south on the Great Highway to Skyline Boulevard (at Lake Merced) and continue south past the stop lights to the top of the hill; turn right just beyond the Fort Funston sign. As the road bears to the right check the fields of ice plant for Killdeer, Brewer's Blackbird, Western Meadowlark and Water

Pipit. Barn Swallows may be found around the buildings. Mourning Doves and American Kestrels may be seen on the wires. Continue to the west end of the lot, park and walk north on the paved Sunset Trail. It is wise to check the ocean from the cliff's edge for previously mentioned species. Enormous flocks of Sooty Shearwaters pass here during late summer and early fall. Scoping this area may be fruitful, but a scope is not needed beyond this point. Fall migrants including Merlin and Savannah Sparrow have been recorded here also.

Continue along the Sunset Trail to the east side of Battery Davis (3). Check the trees for spring migrants including Western Wood Pewee, Olive-sided and Western Flycatcher, Northern Oriole and common warblers. Fall migrants include Black-throated Gray and Townsend's Warblers as well as the excellent possibility of vagrants.

Continue down the hill on the paved path to the grove of trees where the path forks (4). Check this grove thoroughly before continuing to the left. A male Rufous Hummingbird spent the spring of 1979 here. Allen's Hummingbirds are usually present during the spring and early summer and Anna's Hummingbirds are present all year. Western Kingbirds and Say's Phoebes have been seen here on migration. Common Bushtits, warblers, finches and sparrows are also to be found here.

Take the path to the left just past the grove and turn right. Cross the sand dunes to the long row of trees which borders Skyline Boulevard (5). The sand is very hard and little grows here, perhaps due to its past use as a bomb-detonation site by the U.S. Army and the San Francisco Police Department. The stand of trees is particularly good for fall, winter and spring birds. There are records for Red-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Blue Warblers and Palm Warbler. Common Bushtit, Bewick's Wren, Tree and Violet-green Swallows appear to nest in this area. Yellow-rumped Warbler, Fox and Golden-crowned Sparrows and a number of other birds can be found during the fall and winter. Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Common Flicker, Pygmy Nuthatch, Brewer's Blackbird, Scrub Jay, House Finch and White-crowned Sparrow are permanent residents.

From here walk back to the paved path and return to Battery Davis. While in the open areas watch for gulls, terns and swallows. In 1979, a Purple Martin seen here was a first for San Francisco. Walk through the north tunnel entrance to the battery until the path turns left by a bench, continue straight ahead to the edge of the bluff which offers an excellent view of the beach and ocean. From here return to the trail and your car.



Though Fort Funston does not offer the best birding in San Francisco, one may find 25 or more species during the spring and fall. Winter birding is slower and summers are not worth the effort. It should take less than two hours to bird the whole area thoroughly. Even when the birding is not up to par, the view of the City is sure to make this a place you will want to visit again.

—DAN MURPHY

## Annual Dinner June 14

The GGAS annual dinner has been set for Saturday, June 14. It will be held in San Francisco at the Great Electric Underground in the Bank of America headquarters building. Dinners will cost \$12.50 per person. Mark your calendars now and plan to join us. Further details in the May *Gull*.

## Cooper Society Meeting

The April 7 meeting of the Cooper Society will feature Scott Hatch of UC's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. He will speak on the seabirds of the Alaskan Gulf — how many, where and their future considering oil exploration and exploration. The meeting will be held in room 2503 of the Life Sciences Building on the UC campus at 8 p.m. A business meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. precedes each seminar.

## Golden Trout Workshop

For the sixth year, the Golden Trout Workshop sponsored by the Pasadena, San Fernando Valley and Santa Barbara Audubon chapters will be held in the southern Sierra near Lone Pine at an altitude of 10,000 feet.

This is a backpack camp. Guests hike in two and a half miles carrying their sleeping bags and personal belongings. Facilities include dormitory style tents accommodating four to six persons. Meals are provided.

Hikes led by naturalists offer a chance to learn the alpine ecology of the flora and fauna.

The two sessions are July 27-August 2 and August 3-August 9. Cost is \$125 for adults and \$90 for children 11 and under.

For complete information contact Tomi Sollen, 825 N. Soledad, Santa Barbara, CA 93103.

## Mono Lake Legislative Action Alert

The final report of the Interagency Task Force on Mono Lake recommends the restoration of the lake to its 1970 elevation of 6,388 feet, 15 feet above its present level. A.B. 2235, introduced by Assemblyman Norman Waters, implements the Task Force recommendations. Urge your assemblyman or state senator to co-sponsor this bill. Tell him you oppose A.B. 2182, introduced by Assemblyman Mike Roos, which would prevent any reduction of the Mono Basin water diversions until a five-year research program is completed.

Tax deductible contributions may be sent to National Audubon Society's Mono Lake Fund c/o the Mono Lake Committee, P.O. Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541. Non-tax deductible contributions to help defray expenses in the lawsuit against the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power should be sent to the Mono Lake Committee, P.O. Box 2764, Oakland, CA 94602.

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April 1980

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Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$20 per year (individual); \$25 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$5 per year; single issues 50¢. High school and college student membership \$13.50 per year. Senior citizen individual, \$13.50, senior citizen family, \$15.50.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

***The Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**